

May 25, 2007

**TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
LOCAL/STATE BOARD FACILITIES HEARING REPORT**

A Local/State public hearing was held at the Taylor County Board of Education Building on May 24, 2007, at 5:30 p.m. (local time). The purpose of the public hearing was to propose a new District Facility Plan developed by the Taylor County Local Planning Committee. The Local Planning Committee (LPC) voted 10 to 0 in favor of the proposed new plan and the Board voted 5 to 0 to approve the new plan.

There were 11 individuals in attendance. Gary N. Seaborne, Superintendent, served as the locally-appointed hearing officer. Those present included the five members of the Taylor County Board of Education, a teacher and two District Administrators, a District HVAC technician, an elementary student and a reporter from the Central Kentucky News Journal.

COMMENTS

Mr. Seaborne called the public hearing to order. The hearing officer outlined the purpose of the hearing and the hearing procedures in accordance with 702 KAR 1:001. It was explained that those persons wishing to speak would be given the opportunity and that written statements would be accepted. It was also noted that all considerations will be made available to the Kentucky Board of Education via the hearing officer's report. The hearing officer read the proposed new District Facility Plan that includes: **the construction of a new high school to help alleviate capacity problems at all other district schools, major renovation of Taylor County Elementary School, renovation to Taylor County Middle School, renovation of Taylor County School Bus Garage, renovation and addition to the Central Office Building and renovation and addition to the District Maintenance Building.**

The floor was opened to those who wished to make a statement. There were no public comments made and the Hearing Officer adjourned the Public Hearing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Kentucky Department of Education, Division Facilities Management, Planning Branch DOES NOT recommend approval of the proposed district facilities plan presented by Taylor County for the following reasons:

- The demographic projections provided by the University of Louisville indicate that the Taylor County School District will lose about 3% of its student population over the next 25 years. The primary challenge in the district is the large and over crowded elementary school. The construction of a new High School would address the issue, but would create more under-utilized space at a cost that is beyond the means to the district to realistically consider.
 - **702 KAR 1:001 requires that, “When a new building or building expansion is proposed in the DFP, the LPC shall prepare a narrative explaining the need for additional space. The LPC shall investigate the availability of space in adjoining districts as well as other options that may be available. The results of this investigation, including the advantages and disadvantages of**

contracting students to the adjoining district, shall be set forth in the narrative.” This is not required for districts in which the need for a new facility is borne out by demographic projections.

- With the district’s limited bonding potential and declining population they do not have the financial means to reasonably expect to construct a new high school.
 - **The MASTER EDUCATIONAL FACILITY PLAN GUIDELINES, incorporated by reference in 702 KAR 1:001 requires that the district, “Provide a financial plan of monies available for facility improvements over the next five to ten years, including cash and bonds. This plan is to be developed in consultation with the district’s fiscal agent.”**
- The District currently has a current surplus capacity of about 220 students or 8.5% of its current enrollment. As noted above, the primary challenge in the district is the large and over crowded elementary school. It has a current enrollment of 1,151 students and a capacity of 1,175. The district will need to address this challenge incrementally. We have proposed the first step in this process as the construction of a new appropriately sized elementary school. This will allow the district to develop a future plan in which the current elementary is redesigned.
- The Plan proposed by the District would change the current High School to a Middle School resulting in an excess capacity of about 350 students. It would change the Middle School into an upper elementary school resulting in an excess capacity of about 200 students. It would change the Elementary School into a lower elementary school resulting in an excess capacity of about 385 students. The total plan would create an excess capacity of about 975 students or about 37% of the current enrollment. This is in a district with declining student population.
- With the challenges faced by the District, a much more reasonable Plan has been developed to support education requirements, financial stability and to realistically address the changing demographics in the District. This Plan was initially unanimously approved by the LPC, but rejected by the local board, which then presented the current Plan.

(Note: Additional background information is attached.)

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by;

Gary Seaborne, Hearing Officer

Timothy K. Lucas, KDE Fac. Mgmt.

cc: Mark W. Ryles, Director
Planning File

Att.: Local/State Board Public Hearing Agenda
Taylor County School District Facility Plan